

# Project Graduate Plan – Phase One

Your Institution: **Kentucky State University**

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## Background:

Project Graduate is a statewide outreach effort to engage and graduate returning adult students. Phase I focuses on adults who have earned a large number of course credits.

## Your Campus Plan:

Your Campus Response Team		
Name	Email	Title
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## Incentives

- Quick Admit Process
- Free Application
- Priority Enrollment
- Tuition Assistance
- Tuition Waiver
- Individual Advising
- Degree Summary
- Other
  - o Personalized career counseling
  - o Credit for Professional/Life's Experiences

Describe how your campus plan to implement a "high-touch" response to the Project Graduate outreach initiative:

Kentucky State University will implement a campus action plan designed to provide academically qualified individuals the chance to complete a baccalaureate degree, improve their earning power, and contribute more to their community and the Commonwealth of Kentucky. More specifically, the institution will collaborate with the KCPE in a systematic effort to identify, recruit, and support students who have left Kentucky State University after completing the majority of work required to attain a baccalaureate degree. Both national and regional research results indicate that many students who leave college prior to earning a degree depart because of job, family, finances, and other pressures, not because they are academically unqualified. Consistent with these research findings and the intentions of Goals 2020, we believe that our plan represents an efficient and effective strategy for facilitating their re-entry to degree pursuit, while eventually increasing the number of students who graduate from the institution.

Certainly, fully facilitating the ease of transition for qualified students, from the work force back into degree pursuit and eventually degree completion, is a mutually beneficial goal for all involved parties. Kentucky State University and the Commonwealth of Kentucky have already invested resources in them and our desire to increase the percentage of state residents holding baccalaureate degrees will represent a substantial return on that investment for the Commonwealth.

There are various delimitations implied by the comparatively small population of students ( $n = 459$ ) available for re-entry into Kentucky State University, as identified in the initial query. To maximize our ability to negotiate these parameters during the project's initial phase, the institution will additionally (1) implement a threshold of 80 earned credit hours, as opposed to 90 credit hours, in qualifying prospects for the program, (2) provide additional marketing of the opportunity to attain the baccalaureate degree to those students who meet our desired profile and have previously attained an associate degree, (3) ensure collaboration between academic advisers and the Office of the Registrar to identify the courses each of these students needs to graduate from their respective programs of study, (4) emphasize the BA in Liberal Studies/General Studies degree programs as palatable options for meeting their individual professional and academic needs and goals, and (5) invite the candidates to return to Kentucky State University, where they will receive priority enrollment for the courses they need and be teamed with an academic adviser to guide them toward successful degree completion.

To attain these desired outcomes, the university will implement a holistic approach that is designed to address all of the factors impacting their re-entry and baccalaureate degree completion, inclusive of the following incentives:

### **Admissions**

The institution will:

- Identify and appoint one admissions counselor to exclusive coordinating responsibilities at a .50 full time equivalency ratio.
- Design and implement a truncated readmission application, specifically designed to facilitate ease of re-entry to the institution.
- Waive any associated application, transcript, or other associated fees.
- Facilitate an expedited readmissions process inclusive of personal interaction with the candidates

### **Enrollment**

The institution will:

- Provide to candidates priority enrollment in classes that are required to graduate.
- Generate and provide a comprehensive degree audit summary that clearly identifies (1) the specific and various degree options available to the individual student, (2) the remaining curricular requirements for those respective degree options, and (3) a detailed narrative of potential course substitutions and/or credit applications.
- Facilitate coordination between The Office of Academic Affairs and the Office of Career Counseling and Placement to provide candidates with applicable course credit for professional and life related experiences.

### **Advising**

The institution will:

- Provide to candidates an intrusive system of academic advisement that clearly delineates and utilizes the results of the generated comprehensive degree audit summary.

### **Counseling**

The institution will:

- Provide the candidates with personalized counseling services that (1) utilize the results of the generated comprehensive degree audit summary, and (2) fully explicate the career options and placements that are implied by those respective degree options.

### **Finances**

The institution will:

- Provide special tuition assistance to returning students who are within 18 semester credit hours of graduation.
- Provide special tuition assistance to returning students who maintain at least a 2.75 grade point average.
- Facilitate arrangements for monthly tuition payments.
- Provide eligibility for other institutional academic scholarships and academic achievement awards, consistent with the present academic performance criteria.
- Ensure student eligibility for *Breds' Pledge* special assistance to those students demonstrating specific economic and/or financial hardships.

### **Marketing**

The institution will:

- Fashion and disseminate specific marketing materials and a communications flow plan that target

this specific population of students.

- Implement interactive campus visitations in efforts to (1) fully inform this population of the benefits of the program, and (2) gain knowledge of the unique needs of this population, (3) fashion a better institutional understanding of the short term and long term resource implications.
  
- Collaborate with the KCPE to take full advantage of an integrative marketing approach.

## Looking Ahead:

### How can we help your campus be successful?

What communication and marketing needs do you anticipate?

- Media Placement     Postage & Distribution     Creative Development & Production  
 Call Center     Online Marketing  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_

What additional staffing support is necessary to be successful in providing a "high touch" response to these students?

A .50 FTE admissions counselor  
Campus Project Coordinator  
\_\_\_\_\_

What additional funding needs do you anticipate?

- Funding to facilitate a .50 FTE admissions counselor: \$20,000
- Funding to facilitate program coordination responsibilities: \$37,000

### Policy Concerns and Other Anticipated Barriers

- Current policies for providing credit for professional/life experiences must be expanded to encompass the intentions of the program as well as to reflect the profile of experiences represented by this population.
- Eventually, effective strategies for debt forgiveness must be implemented, if the incentives for re-entry are to be seriously considered by the population.

- The initiative must be perceived, approached, and implemented as a campus-wide effort, with all aspects of the campus fully collaborating.
- Additional funding must be forthcoming from the KCPE to the institution; funding that is commensurate with the current priority of this initiative.

**Please complete and return this document no later than June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2007 to:**

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